

REMARKS

Claims 1, 3-5, 9 and 10 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claim 1 is amended. Claim 1 is amended to incorporate the features of claim 6, as well as other features. Claim 6 is canceled without prejudice to, or disclaimer, of the subject matter recited in this claim. Claims 9 and 10 are added. Support for the addition of claims 9 and 10 can be found, for example, in Figs. 5 and 6. No new matter is added by the amendments. A Request for Continued Examination is attached. Reconsideration of the application in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks is respectfully requested.

Applicant wishes to express appreciation to Examiner Mruk for the courtesies extended Applicant's representative during the December 13, 2006 telephone interview. The following remarks incorporate Applicant's summary of the substance of the interview.

During the December 13 telephone interview, while discussing the application and the pending claims with the Examiner, Examiner Mruk indicated his belief that the features of the corner lips 52c and 52f, shown in Fig. 8 of the application, appeared to be patentably distinguishable over the applied prior art reference of U.S. Patent No. 6,203,136 to Takahashi et al. (Takahashi). The Examiner even suggested that if claim 1 was amended to incorporate this feature, such an amendment may overcome the rejection based on the Takahashi reference.

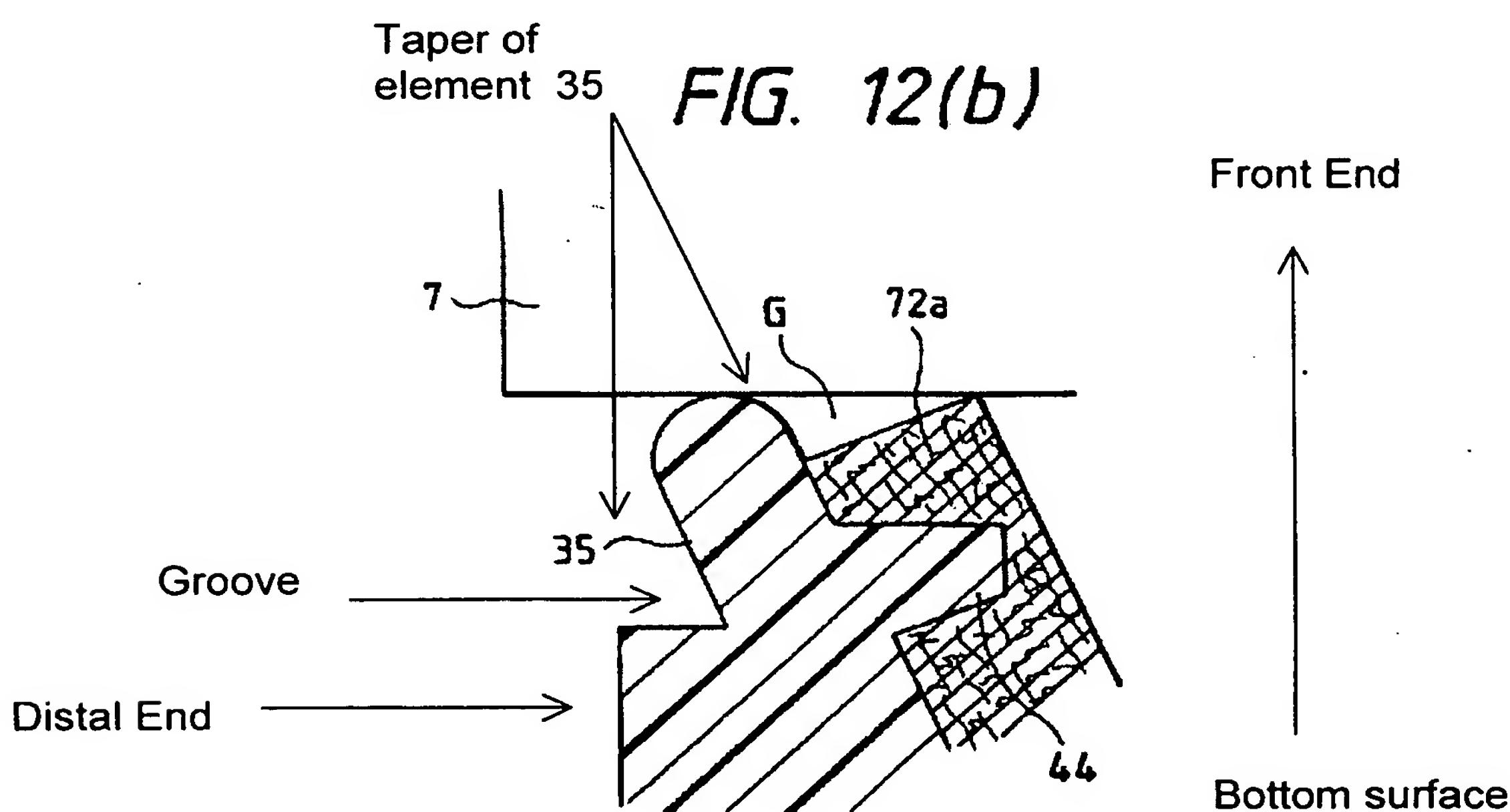
Although Applicant is pleased that the Examiner indicated that it appears that the subject matter illustrated in Fig. 8 is patentable over the applied reference of Takahashi. However, Applicant notes that the embodiment shown in Fig. 8 is currently being prosecuted in the co-pending Divisional Application (U.S. Patent Application No. 11/512,374) as the non-elected claims of the earlier Election of Species Requirement.

The Office Action rejects claims 1 and 3-6 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Takahashi. The rejection of claim 6 is moot in view of the cancellation of claim 6. The rejection is respectfully traversed with respect to claims 1 and 3-5.



Claim 1 recites, among other features, wherein the ring-like lip has corners that change a direction of surrounding the bottom surface and includes a distal end and a groove that urges the distal end to be deformed in an outer side of the ring-like lip, the distal end falling down to an inside of the groove when a print head cap is pressed onto the nozzle surface. Takahashi does not teach, nor can it reasonably be considered to have suggested these features.

The Office Action alleges that the clearance having a triangular cross-section under the draping 35, as taught by Takashi (see below, Fig. 12(b) of Takashi), corresponds to the groove, as positively recited in claim 1 and shown, for example in Fig. 6. Applicant respectfully disagrees.



Rather, in Takahashi, the distal end of draping 35 does not fall downward to an inside position of draping 35 when the print head cap is pressed onto the nozzle surface. This is

clearly shown when comparing the cap detached from the print head as shown in Fig. 11(b) of Takahashi with the cap assembled with and attached to the print head in Figs. 12(a)-(c). In Figs. 11(b) and Figs. 12(a)-(c), the draping remains substantially erect. One specific reason that the draping does not fall downward to an inside position is because the intent of the draping 35 is to function as a barrier which allows ink to gather in order to prevent an ink overflow, as discussed in col. 8, lines 55-57 and shown in Fig. 12(c).

For at least the above reason, claim 1, and the claims depending therefrom, are patentably distinguishable over the applied prior art references.

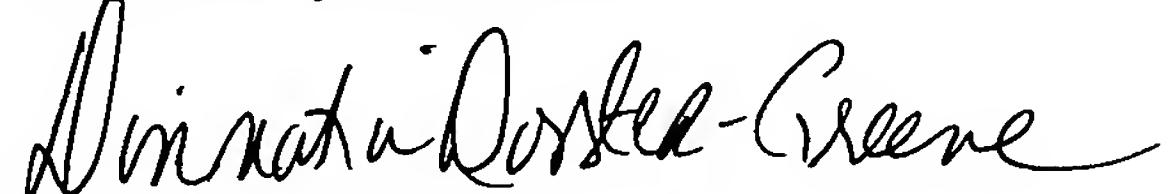
Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of claims 1 and 3-5 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Takahashi are respectfully requested.

Claim 9 depends from claim 1, and as such this claim is allowable over the applied prior art references to the same extent as claim 1. Claim 10 recites features similar to claim 1 and recites that the groove extends vertically and perpendicular to the bottom surface, as shown, for example, in Figs. 4 and 5. Rather, as discussed above, the alleged groove in Takahashi, has an inclined-shape which forms a triangular configuration. Thus, claim 10 is also patentable over Takahashi.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims 1, 3-5, 9 and 10 are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



James A. Oliff
Reg. No. 27,075

Dinnatia J. Doster-Greene
Registration No. 45,268

JAO:DJG/mab

Attachments:

Request for Continued Examination

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OLIFF & BERRIDGE, PLC
P.O. Box 19928
Alexandria, Virginia 22320
Telephone: (703) 836-6400

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